

Fiftieth Anniversary

**TOWN OF
READLYN, IOWA
1904-1954**



Celebration
JUNE 10-11-12, 1954

This golden anniversary booklet was prepared and written to refresh the memories of those who contributed to the progress of Readlyn and to enlighten our younger citizens with some of the happenings of our town during its first fifty years of history.

See Page 27 For Program of Events



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Readlyn History

That section of the Chicago Great Western railway between Waverly and Oelwein was built and in operation in year 1903. It cut across Maxfield township, entering on section 12, traversing the township in a direct line due west, leaving the township at section 7. This is one of the richest communities, not only in Bremer county, but in the State of Iowa. The farms are highly productive, large quantities of oats and corn are produced and a great number of cattle are raised for the markets. Creameries abound, and in fact almost everything is raised in this section that goes for the creature comforts of man.

In 1903 certain enterprising citizens in the neighborhood prevailed upon the authorities of the railroad to establish a station at a point on its line within this magnificent farming district, to enable them to have a closer market for their products. The request was acceded to and the company established a stopping point on section 11. Appreciating the generous compliance with their wishes, those active in the movement and living in the vicinity named the town Readlyn, in compliment of Read, one of the officials.

Active preparations were at once made for the laying out of a town. To this end a public sale of lots was advertised and on Nov. 10, 1903, a large number of building sites was disposed of by the Iowa Town Site company, which had platted and laid out the town and in a short time several substantial buildings were put up. The first building erected was a residence by George Vanderwalker.

On Oct. 26, 1904, the enthusiastic citizens of the young village voted on the proposition of incorporating the town of Readlyn. The election disclosed the fact that 29 ballots had been cast in favor of the project and not one vote was in the negative. At this time there were less than 50 persons living within the corporate limits but they were all so united for the betterment of the town that public improvements were discussed and carried out at an early date. At the same election which resulted in the incorporation of Readlyn, the following officials were elected to govern the affairs of the little municipal corporation: Mayor, George Vanderwalker; Treasurer, J. D. Brooks; Henry Klemp and Herman Thran.

Among the early business concerns in the town was a lumber yard. Soon a number of business places were in operation and everything bid fair to the realization of the hopes of the profectors of the trading point. In 1904, the same year the town was incorporated, the Readlyn Creamery was built. Herman Thran built a meat market and the post office was established. In 1908 Pooch & Meier built a harness shop and Christ Miller moved his blacksmith shop from Klinger to Readlyn. Many more business were established but the exact dates are not known and for that reason are not mentioned.

Quite a dampener, however, was placed on their enthusiasm when, on the night of Sept. 9, 1912, the greater portion of the business district was destroyed by fire, occasioning a loss of about twenty thousand dollars. No one was dismayed by the disaster. The debris was soon cleared away and better and more substantial structures took the place of the old ones. But everyone was taught a lesson and the movement was at once advanced for the erection of a waterworks system. To this end the question of bonding the town for \$6,000, to be used in the building of a waterworks system, was submitted to the suffrage of the citizens on the 10th of February, 1913, and was carried practically by unanimous vote. At this election there were 91 votes cast and but six of them were

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against the proposition of building a waterworks. It should be added in justice to the women that of the 27 feminine votes cast, every one was for the improvement. The work of laying mains was at once pushed rapidly forward, a water tank with a capacity of 30,000 gallons was erected on a steel tower 100 feet in height and by the 1st of September, 1913, the system was practically completed. This included a well 108 feet deep.

On main street was constructed a concrete building to be used as a pumping station. The water is of fine quality and in sufficient quantity to give the citizens a plentiful supply of their daily uses and afford the town ample protection for fire. The pressure is about one hundred pounds. The building is also used for a council room and jail.

Readlyn is the youngest town in the county but it appears to be for the short time of its existence the best put up little place in this section of the state.

The bank was established on May 25, 1904, and opened for business June 15 as the Readlyn Savings Bank. It was capitalized at \$10,000 and had for its officers: William Meyerhoff, president; Carl Bruns, vice-president; J. W. Hough, cashier. It is located in its own building which is a substantial brick structure. In December, 1910, Mr. Hough resigned as cashier and was succeeded by Emil C. Stumme and on the 15th of August, 1910, the capital was increased to \$25,000. Upon Mr. Stumme's death, Louis Widdel was appointed cashier. In 1942 Mr. Widdel resigned and replaced by B. C. Stumme, the present cashier. At last report the deposits are shown to be \$1,146,248.13.

The fire of Sept. 9, 1912, wiped out six business establishments and the telephone exchange. Those included the Henry Everding restaurant, the Otto Hahn barber shop and restaurant, the Wm. Klemp barber shop and pool hall, the J. W. Kehe drug store, and the J. A. Beckius hardware. The telephone exchange was located on the second floor above the drug store.

In the fall of 1914 another lot sale was held in the north part of town which is known as Wolf's addition. Most of the new homes the past few years have been built in this addition.

By 1916 the school enrollment had increased and a second one-room grade school was built.

In 1917 Zion Lutheran church was built.

In January of 1918 electricity was made available to the citizens of Readlyn. Power lines were built by Tegtmeier Bros. from Westgate to Readlyn. Soon thereafter lines were built in the rural areas surrounding Readlyn.

In 1932 the water mains were extended to various parts of town and all mains were hooked in a circuit.

In 1934 Readlyn entered into an agreement with the City of Cedar Falls to buy their electricity from them. Six miles of high line was built to hook up with the Cedar Falls line. The town then built its own distribution system and has been retailing electricity to its citizens since that time.

In 1935 the present high school building was built which houses both the high school and grade students.

In 1947 a new well was dug to supply water for its residents. The new well has a depth of 208 feet and is so constructed to meet the most rigid health requirements.

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In 1950 all streets were blacktopped.

In 1953 the Community Building was completed.

Readlyn has two city-owned parks. One at the north end of Main street is the scene of many group gatherings and family reunions during the summer months. It is equipped with swings and playground equipment. The other, known as the Athletic Park, is located in the north-east part of town and is used by the Readlyn High school. The Readlyn Baseball club plays its home Cedar Valley league games here and many youngsters use its facilities during the summer.

Readlyn numbers among its local organizations the following: VFW Post, VFW Auxiliary, Boy Scout troop, Commercial club and a volunteer fire department that serves both town and rural area.

Doctors who served this community during the past fifty years were Drs. Feeker, Dunham, Guernsey, Harmon, Osnes, Miller, Allen and at present, Ridenauer.

Readlyn has no major industries but numbers among its businesses 26 retail establishments, two bulk oil plants, one station agent, one doctor, two veterinarians, two ditching and tiling machines, six carpenter, painting and cement crews, a local telephone exchange that rings 490 phones, and is the home of the Readlyn Mutual Insurance Association.

Readlyn has 153 well-kept homes, plus four new homes now under construction and seven up-stairs apartments. It now has a population of 503 and is looking to the future with confidence.



Main Street In 1905



Business section of Readlyn during the winter of 1905, looking east.

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First Mayor



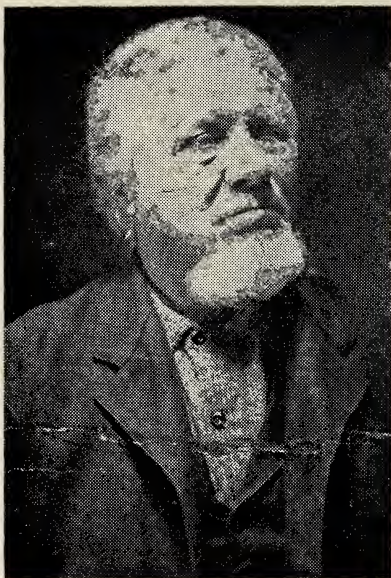
Geo. Vanderwalker

City Park



The park at the north end of Main street is shown here at an early date. It is now equipped with playground equipment and in the summer is the scene of many family gatherings and reunions.

Readlyn's First Officials



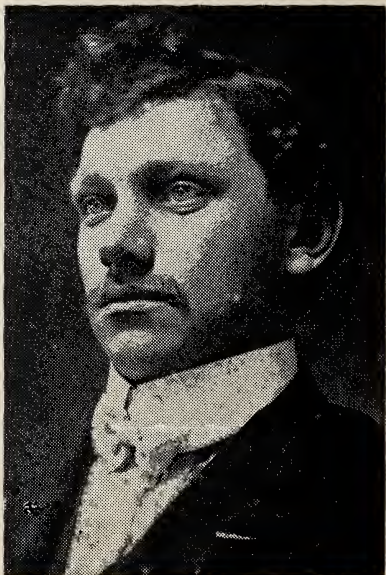
H. Rathe, Clerk



Wm. Brooks

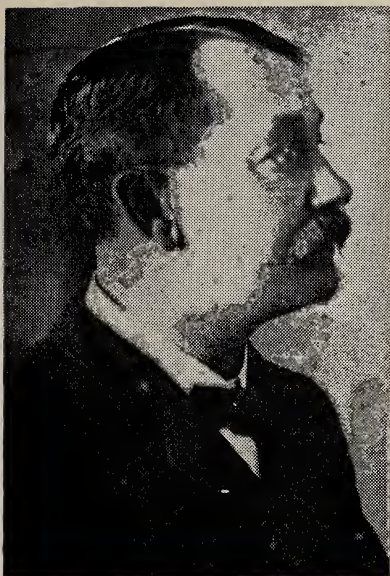


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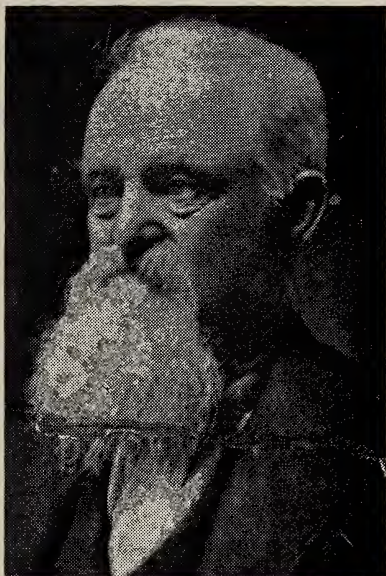


H. Thran

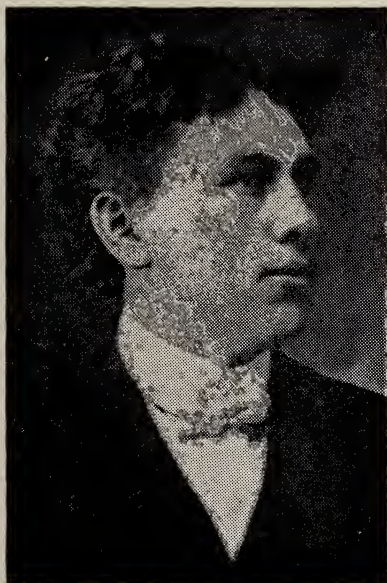
Readlyn's First Officials



C. J. Kuenster



J. D. Brooks, Treasurer



H. Klemp



Dr. H. A. Feiker

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THROUGHOUT ITS
50 YEARS
OF
PROGRESS

Readlyn Fire Department

With the founding of the Town of Readlyn, a form of fire protection had to be arraigned and at this writing, the first records cannot be found, so the early history of the Readlyn Volunteer Fire Department is taken more or less from the memory of the early residents of Readlyn.

The first fire department was composed of eight men and the equipment at the time was a fire bell to give the alarms and one two-wheel chemical engine or extinguisher which had to be pulled by hand or behind a team and wagon.

This equipment was used to handle the fire on the west side of Main street in 1912. Water was carried in pails, tubs and anything available from the private wells of the town's residents, so the fire department and the people of Readlyn should be commended for their excellent performance in averting a major disaster.

The installation of a water distribution system brought about the need for a better organized fire protection system, so on Aug. 27, 1913, a meeting of the citizens was called to order by Mayor George Vanderwalker for the purpose of electing 12 citizens to constitute the Readlyn Volunteer Fire Department. The men elected were: F. L. Diekmann, C. W. Diekmann, C. H. Pooch, Ernest Spier, E. C. Stumme, John Niedert, F. H. Meyer, Dem Mersch, Herman Bock, H. G. Moeller, H. F. Klemp and Herman Thran.

On Sept. 2, 1913, the Town Council met and approved the election of the firemen and the minutes of the citizens' meeting. The newly elected firemen held their first meeting on Sept. 3, 1913, at which time 38 Articles and By-Laws were adopted. These same articles and by-laws are still in effect with but few changes or additions. Election of officers was held and F. L. Diekmann was elected chief, which position he held until 1935; Assistant Chief, Dem Mersch; Secretary, E. C. Stumme; Treasurer, H. G. Moeller; Trustees, C. H. Pooch and H. F. Klemp. It was also agreed that fire alarms were to be sounded with a series of three 'taps of the fire bell.

At the end of the year 1913 the records show the fire department consisted of one two-wheel chemical engine; one two-wheel hose cart; approximately 500-feet of 2½-inch hose; 2 nozzels; 2 roof ladders; two 32-foot extension ladders; one 20-foot single ladder; one ladder wagon; two fire hooks; one chain and hook; two lanterns; one hydrant pump; four coats; 4 hats.

Records of the first Fireman's Benefit Dance held in December, 1913, tell us that 86 \$1.00 dance tickets were sold and 10 25c spectator tickets were sold. There has been no change in the price of Fireman's Dance tickets up to date.

During the year 1917 four extra firemen were added to the department, bringing the total members to 16.

On May 7, 1918, a fire siren was purchased with donations of \$2.50 from each business place and each dwelling in Readlyn. The siren was placed on top of the Town Hall, where it has remained to date. The first smoke masks were purchased by the Town Council in 1922.

Mr. E. C. Stumme served as secretary of the fire department from Sept. 3, 1913, until his death on Dec. 16, 1934. His death was the first among the active members of the department since its organization in 1913 and the first among the original 12 members.

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In December, 1936, the Town Council purchased the first fire truck. It consisted of two chemical tanks and hose mounted on an International chassis. This truck was without a cab and was purchased from the city of Waterloo, Iowa.

With the increasing demand for more and better fire protection in the farming area, it became necessary to have a community-owned fire truck that could legally be used outside the Town of Readlyn.

Chief O. R. Thran called a joint meeting of farmers and firemen and it was decided to put on a drive to raise funds to purchase a Community truck. The goal was set for \$25.00 per farm and \$10.00 per house in the area to be served by the truck. The men went in teams of one fireman and one farmer. The drive being successful, a committee of three farmers and three firemen was elected to purchase the new truck and equipment. They purchased from the Hooker Supply Co. a 500-gallon per minute pumper mounted on a Ford chassis with 2-speed axle. This truck was delivered in the summer of 1946.

National fire magazines have given recognition to the Readlyn Fire Department for their original and efficient method of transporting a continuous supply of water to rural fires.

In 1950 the use of the chemical truck was discontinued and a new Chevrolet truck was purchased and equipped with ladders and hose. This was done to assure fire protection to the residents of Readlyn while the Community truck is on duty in the country.

Since the delivery of the Community truck to the Readlyn Volunteer Fire Department in 1946 it has been on 61 fire calls, 52 in the country and nine in the Town of Readlyn and the property saved is many times the original cost of the truck.

Having been asked many times as to the salary of the volunteer firemen; the only reward the firemen receive is an annual chicken dinner and an annual oyster and chili supper, the expense of which is taken from membership dues and for fines payed for not attending meetings or practices.

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St. Paul's Lutheran Church

By J. L. Strelow, Pastor

St. Paul's Lutheran church is the first congregation to be founded in Readlyn, Iowa, having been organized on October 24, 1909, only five years after the founding of the town. This organization has its roots in the Immanuel Lutheran church, Klinger, Iowa, 3 miles south of Readlyn. As more and more members of Immanuel, Klinger, moved to Readlyn, the desire to organize a congregation in Readlyn grew. Charter members of St. Paul's were A. H. Moeller, H. W. Meyerhoff, Fred Strumpel, Christ Warneke, W. F. Meyerhoff, Fred Kraeft, Wm. Albrecht, John Judas, J. W. Kehe, F. L. Diekmann, C. W. Diekmann, Wm. Klemp, H. W. Meyer, Fred Diekmann, H. Griesse and Christ Miller.

Beginning in the summer of 1908 Pastor R. Piehler of Klinger held services in the town hall. In the fall of 1909 the newly organized congregation decided to erect a house of worship. A. H. Moeller, H. Meyerhoff, Chris Warneke, J. W. Kehe and C. Diekmann served as building committee. The cornerstone was laid on May 22, 1910. The new edifice was dedicated on Sept. 25, 1910. Vicars H. F. Buettner and Cordts served the congregation until the fall of 1912 when the first resident pastor in the person of Rev. Herman Maas, came to St. Paul's. He remained until August, 1926, when he accepted a call to Lowden, Iowa. At the time of his leaving the congregation had grown from 15 families to 72 voting and 229 communicant members.

The parsonage was completed in November, 1912, shortly after the arrival of Pastor Maas.

In the spring of 1914 the congregation purchased the three lots north of the church for the purpose of erecting a Christian day school, which was dedicated on Nov. 12, 1916. At that time the enrollment was 48. Pastor Maas was the teacher. In 1920 the congregation was debt-free, despite the rather ambitious building program of the first 10 years of its history. During the years 1922-24, the school was taught by Students Ernest Huedepohl and Adolph Grebing, respectively, of River Forest. Student W. J. Dicke taught in 1924-25. In the fall of 1926 the first regularly called teacher was installed. Mr. Fred Torgler, who came here from Courtland, Minn. The enrollment at that time was 58. Pastor Maas taught the three lower grades in the church basement.

On Nov. 21, 1926, the Rev. Theo. Frese was installed as pastor of St. Paul's by Pastor Louis Yockey of Klinger, vacancy pastor.

In 1928 it was found necessary to build an addition to the church edifice. A new pipe organ was purchased and installed the same year.

On Sept. 27, 1942, Pastor Frese was granted a peaceful release to Trinity Lutheran church, Guttenberg, Iowa. At that time the congregation had grown to 80 voting members and 258 communicant members.

His successor was the Rev. Mark J. Steege, who was installed on Nov. 8, 1942, having come here from Cedar Rapids.

In 1943 St. Paul's resolved to organize a Sunday school.

During the summer of 1944 the school building was completely modernized.

In October, 1943, Mr. Torgler resigned as teacher, due to ill health. Pastor Steege taught during the rest of that term.

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On June 11, 1944, Mr. Eldon G. Handrich was installed as teacher and organist. The enrollment at that time was 33. By the end of the term the enrollment had increased to the point where it was deemed necessary to engage a second teacher. The following were engaged to teach the lower grades since that time: Miss Maurin Rathje, Miss Melba Potratz, Miss Lillian Schultz, Mrs. W. Lindemann, Miss Ruth Benning, Miss Fern Suchow, and Miss Miriam Miller.

On Oct. 2, 1946, Pastor Steege was granted a peaceful release to accept the call as Professor of Homiletics at Concordia Theological seminary, Springfield, Ill. At that time the congregation numbered 87 voting and 274 communicant members.

The Rev. George Koch served the congregation as pastor from the fall of 1946 to the end of 1947.

The Rev. Alfred Ernst was installed as pastor in May, 1948. In 1951 the church basement was enlarged and completely modernized, including a large kitchen.

Pastor Ernst remained until the fall of 1953 when he was granted a peaceful release to accept a call to Scottsbluff Nebraska.

The present pastor, the Rev. J. L. Strelow, was installed by Rev. Wm. F. Reddel on Jan. 17, 1954, having come here from Canton, Kansas.

St. Paul's congregation, at the time of this writing in May, 1954, numbers 274 communicant members, 387 baptized souls and 76 voting members.

The present Christian day school enrollment is 37 in the four upper grades taught by Mr. Handrich, principal of the school, and 29 in the kindergarten and four lower grades, taught by Miss Miriam Miller.

Mr. Herbert Pooch is superintendent of the Sunday school.

The Walther League is the youth organization of St. Paul's. It numbers 28 members. Arthur Wehling is president.

The Ladies Aid Society is the oldest group within the congregation, having been organized in 1913. It has a membership of 53. Mrs. Arnold Pooch is president.

The character of a community is no better or worse than the character of its citizens. Giving all credit and glory to God for any and all success in its work, St. Paul's congregation is happy and thankful to have had a part in the character building of the citizens of this community during nearly all of the past half century. By the teaching and preaching of God's word, the power of God unto salvation, we have been privileged to show young and old the way of salvation, and to train them to live as God would have them to do. Good Christians make good citizens. We are grateful for having had the opportunity to build God's kingdom and promote the welfare of Readlyn these many years. May the churches which teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ continue to be a mighty influence for good in this community.

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Zion Lutheran Church

By E. Jacobs, Pastor

Zion Lutheran church is the youngest congregation of the congregations in Readlyn and surrounding territory. It cannot boast of golden or diamond jubilees, but it is nearing its 40th anniversary. It has an interesting history. It can point to growth in numbers as well as things material. Above all it has the means of grace, the Word of God and the Sacraments which make for spiritual growth and strength.

The beginnings of Zion congregation date back to the late 70's when Pastor Paul Bredow of Maxfield township served a group of Lutheran families living in the vicinity of Knittel, 12 miles east of Waverly. Under his direction this group organized under the name: St. Matthew's Ev. Lutheran church. Pastor L. Lobeck, who had just finished his theological studies at the Lutheran seminary at Mendota, Ill., was called to serve this group. He became its first resident pastor. During his ministry the congregation grew rapidly in membership. He served the congregation for 30 years.

After the town of Readlyn—just one mile south of the church—had grown to be the business center of this community with prospects of ever increasing growth, many members of the congregation began to move to Readlyn, some to engage in business, others to retire. It was evident that many more would do likewise in the future.

Meanwhile many members began to feel that the church should be located in the growing and prospering town of Readlyn. This was considered to be the logical place for the church to be. Their dream became a reality under the wise leadership and foresight of the late Pastor M. O. Jahr, who succeeded Pastor Lobeck. At a meeting held in the home of Mr. Rudolph Tiedt on March 12, 1917, the first steps toward the founding of a new congregation in Readlyn were taken. Soon another meeting was held at which Zion Lutheran church was organized. A new constitution was adopted and signed by 38 charter members who were present at the meeting. Definite plans for the erection of a new church building were made. Rev. Paul Kumpf of Talmage, Nebr., was called to serve this new congregation.

Under his guidance the congregation at once proceeded to buy suitable grounds for the church and parsonage buildings. A beautiful modern house with adjoining lots was available at the time. This property was bought and the church building erected on the grounds next to the parsonage in the summer of 1917. It was completed in the fall of the same year and dedicated on Sunday, Oct. 7, 1917. This day was a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving for Zion congregation. The neighboring congregations and many friends from far and near came to take part in this joyful event. The pastors, M. O. Jahr, E. Rausch, D.D., and Prof. John Becker, D.D., were the speakers for the occasion.

This valuable church property is beautifully located on the east side of the town of Readlyn in a residential district away from the traffic noises of Main street and within easy walking distance from all parts of town. In 1927 the parsonage was greatly enlarged by the addition of a modern kitchen with full basement and an extra room on the second floor.

In 1929 Pastor H. A. Schultz of Ida, Mich., became the successor to Pastor Kumpf. He served the congregation diligently and faithfully until he was succeeded by Pastor E. L. Arhelger of Wyoming, Iowa in 1932. The congregation experienced various wholesome changes under the pastorate of Pastor Arhelger. Like his predecessor he stressed

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the use of more English in church and school to meet the demands of the younger generation and to open the door to those who do not understand the German language.

In 1939 A. H. Landgrebe of Cushing, Iowa became the pastor of Zion congregation. Various improvements were made during his pastorate among which were the installing of an oil-burning furnace, remodeling of the basement and kitchen.

In 1951 the present pastor, E. Jacobs of Merrill, Iowa accepted the call to serve Zion Lutheran congregation.

Zion congregation now has a membership of 328 baptized and 237 confirmed members. It has a Sunday school enrollment of 90, including the teachers and officers. The Ladies Aid Society has 29 members; the Brotherhood has 26 members; the Luther League has 22 members, and the Women's Missionary Society has 12 members.

In the near future beautiful art-glass windows are to be installed in the church edifice which will add greatly to the beauty of its place of worship.

Zion Lutheran church is grateful to the Lord for His blessings in the past and looks hopefully into the future eager to serve the Lord of the church by directing lost souls to the Savior of mankind.



Business Section



This photo shows the business section of Readlyn in the early days looking north.

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Ruins of 1912 Fire



Two pictures of the \$100,000 fire that destroyed six businesses and telephone exchange on Sept. 9, 1912.

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PROGRAM OF EVENTS



Friday, June 11, 1954

- 12:30- 2:00— Kids Free Rides
2:30- 4:00— Parade
7:00- 7:30— Decorah Drum and Bugle Corps
7:45- 8:30— Free Acts
9:00 — Dance
- 

Saturday, June 12, 1954

- 9:00-12:00— Sports and Contests
12:00 — Old Settlers Picnic
3:00 — Old Timers Baseball Game
6:30- 7:30— Band Concert (Band to be announced.)
8:15 — Fireworks
9:00 — Dance

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Readlyn School

On July 2, 1906, W. Brooks, T. W. Matthiesen, H. E. Dunham, John Beckius and L. H. Meyer were elected to the school board. J. W. Hough and George Vanderwalker, also elected, were secretary and treasurer, respectively.

Thirty-one ballots were cast in the July 12, 1906 election to issue a \$1,430.00 bond to build a school house. The bond issue carried by a vote of 24 to 7.

Mrs. E. C. Hodges was the first teacher. She opened school on Jan. 14, 1907. She received a salary of \$35.00 per month.

Mrs. Hodges resigned April 22. Miss Nell Shellman took her place at the same salary.

Lily Holt Schaal began teaching in Readlyn Sept. 2, 1907. She, too, received \$35.00 per month. Her contract contained the clause, "It is further agreed that should the above named teacher resign before the entire term of school is finished, the board will hold back one month's salary."

Miss Lillian Clach replaced Miss Schaal. She received \$45.00 per month. Miss Clach taught until Dec. 5, 1910, when Miss Kathryn Ronan replaced her.

The 1910 tax levy was as follows: \$400.00 for teachers fund; \$200.00 for contingent fund; \$200.00 for schoolhouse fund. Total \$800.00.

In the fall of 1911 Miss Alice Sunderson began teaching in Readlyn. She continued until March 6, 1913. Miss Smith replaced her.

The tax levy for July 1, 1913, was: Teachers fund, \$350.00; contingent fund, \$150.00; schoolhouse fund, \$200.00.

Teachers wages were raised to \$50.00 per month. Miss Augusta Propp was hired. She continued until March 16, 1914. Miss Pearle Steele took her place. Miss Esther Daniels taught from 1914 through 1916 at \$55.00 per month.

The proposition, "Shall the board of directors of the Independent School District of Readlyn be authorized to issue bonds for \$700 for the purpose of constructing and equipping an additional schoolhouse for Readlyn?" was presented to the voters March 13, 1916.

It was decided to build the second school and two teachers, Miss Frieda Mueller and Miss Emma Grossman were hired for the 1916-1917 school year.

J. W. Judas contracted to build the second building for \$1000.

The July 1, 1916 tax levy was: Schoolhouse, \$1000; teachers fund, \$375.00; contingent fund, \$125.00.

Fred Judas bought the hay on the schoolhouse grounds for \$1.25.

Emma Grossman and Neva Baumgartnee taught through the 1917-1918 school year.

1918-1919 school year found Miss Baumgartnee and Maude Noble teaching in the Readlyn schools. The same two taught during the 1919-1920 school year. They were paid \$100.00 per month.

The tax levy in 1920 was as follows: General fund, \$2000.00; schoolhouse fund, \$250.00; janitor, \$3.00 per week.

Emma Kiesal and Gertrude Wade taught in 1920 and 1921. In 1921 and 1922 Paul Meier and Ella Greenley taught.

Instructors for 1922 and 1923 were Esthella Van Dorn and Helen Krueger. 1923 and 1924 found the same two teaching.

The 1925 tax levy was \$4000.00 for the general fund.

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READLYN

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READLYN

Erna Steege and Paula Maas taught in 1925 and 1926. They earned \$95.00 per month.

Running water was piped into both school houses in 1926.

The same two teachers remained at Readlyn for the next two years. 1928 found Paula Maas teaching with Lillian Ernsting. Lillian Ernsting remained for the next year. She was joined by Anne Schoembohm.

Tax levy for 1930 was: \$4260.00, general fund, and \$500.00, school-house fund.

1930-1931 teachers were Margaret Ross and Margeret Kane.

In 1931 a partition was put in the West schoolhouse, making two class rooms. Ninth and tenth grades were then added. The teachers for that year were Margeret Ross, Margaretta Leigh and Helen Imbough.

The hiring of A. N. Busse in 1934 marked the beginning of many steps toward building and equipping a new high school.

The teachers for that year were Margeret Ross, Marvel Meeknsa and A. N. Busse.

On February 9, 1935, the school board hired John Ralston as architect. On May 16, 1935, an election was held as to whether Readlyn should construct and equip a new high school. The bond issue was for \$7000.00. Two-hundred, twenty-nine ballots were cast with 162 votes in favor and 67 against.

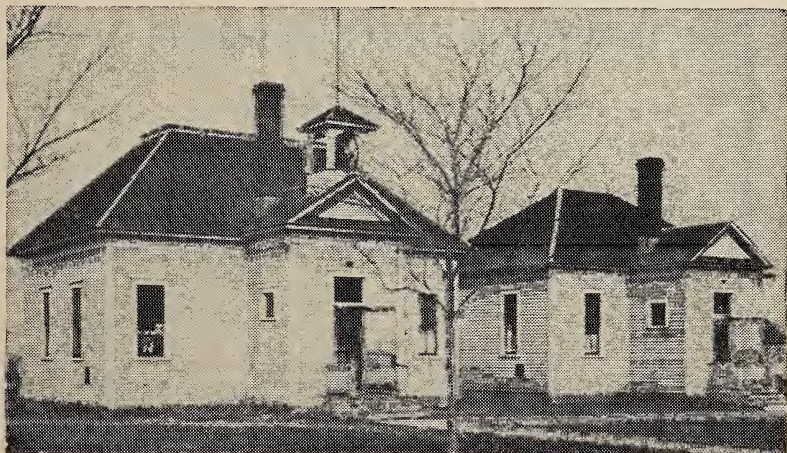
The enrollment for the first full year of high school was 45 in high school and 30 in grade school.

Now there are 107 in high school and 177 in grade school.

The superintendents from 1936 to 1954 were A. N. Busse, G. D. Hiatt and Stephen Wieland.



Readlyn's First School



Pictured here are the two buildings that comprised the Readlyn Independent school district in the early days.

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READLYN

Readlyn Mutual Insurance Association

About 100 years ago settlers from the overpopulated regions of Germany came to Maxfield township, Bremer county and established homes on the fertile soil of this beautiful, spacious land of ours.

Untold hardships had to be endured crossing the great Atlantic ocean on sailships, finding their way in a strange land to Chicago and then in covered wagons over the prairie to Bremer county.

How grateful they were owning quarter sections of land where in the old world they had little of nothing. With relentless determination, hard work and long hours the rich soil was worked and produced rich harvests. Buildings, though small, were erected, churches and schools were built.

Every year more settlers arrived from the home villages and were welcomed and helped to a new beginning. There was a true, unselfish spirit of sharing.

It was around 1870 when one of the old pioneers through a fire lost everything he had built up. Neighbors had come to help and were deeply moved when their friend, standing on a heap of ashes, cried out, "All is gone, we are ruined, what shall I do?" With one accord they answered, "We all will help you to a new home and buildings."

They gave money for new material and assisted to erect it. This deed of kindness and sharing prompted some to suggest in giving a certain sum annually to have money available if another calamity of fire, lightning or tornado should come about.

A meeting was called Sept. 26, 1875, and a company was formed under the name of The German Mutual Fire, Lightning and Tornado Insurance Company of the Farmers of Maxfield.

The first officers to serve were John Meier, Julius Dorn and Henry Poock.

The records from 1875-1883 were lost but judging from the list of names the secretary, Julius Dorn, entered into the ledger the membership in this organization must have increased rapidly, for not only farmers of Maxfield township, but also of the adjoining territory, Bennington, Mt. Vernon, Jefferson, Dayton, Warren, Douglas, Franklin, Freemond.

At first the house and barn was insured, but soon household goods, cattle and grain are mentioned.

Houses were insured for \$250-\$500, farm buildings from \$400-\$800, stove at \$25, one dozen chairs \$3, table \$4, bed \$25. At first 25c for every \$100 insurance was levied. Later on one mill, 1½ mills and in recent years the average was 2½ mills.

From May 1883-Jan. 1884, in 8 months, \$55,431 insurance was written. In 1895, 20 years after its founding, statutes were issued in printed form with 15 articles and 16 by-laws. Three directors were added to constitute a Board of Directors to manage the business of the company.

The secretary was allowed \$1.50 for every day spent in discharge of his official duties. Other officers had a compensation set by the board of directors.

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READLYN

Again in 1915 new articles of incorporation were drawn up to comply with the laws of the State of Iowa. Readlyn was selected to be the principle place of business.

The protocol was signed by John Widdel as president and Henry Matthias as secretary. The old name was dropped and the name of Readlyn Mutual Insurance Association accepted in 1952. A permanent structure to be used as the home office was erected.

In 1920 the insurance in force amounted to \$4,566,025.00; 1930, \$9,662,948.00; 1940, \$12,433,245.00; 1953, \$36,002,390.00, with a balance on hand of \$127,877.76 and an emergency fund of \$50,000.00.

The present officers are as follows: F. W. Poock, president; John Hesse, vice president; A. H. Matthias, secretary; Louis Widdel, treasurer.



1908 Readlyn Ball Team



A baseball team was organized in Readlyn soon after its founding and since that time Readlyn has been always regarded as a top baseball town.

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James Samuelson --- Manager

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READLYN

Coop. Creamery

Late in the spring of 1905 the Readlyn Creamery, with a patronage list of 33 members, started its buttermaking activities. Whole milk was delivered to the creamery and separated at the local plant, then the cream manufactured into butter.

From the year 1905 to 1925 it operated as a stockholders company. Then in 1925 the stockholders were paid their shares and it was reorganized as a Cooperative Creamery company under state laws.

As far as could be found out from old record books the first directors were: Carl Hagenow, H. Wm. Meyerhoff, Rudolf Tiedt, Edward Huebner and H. Schoenbucker.

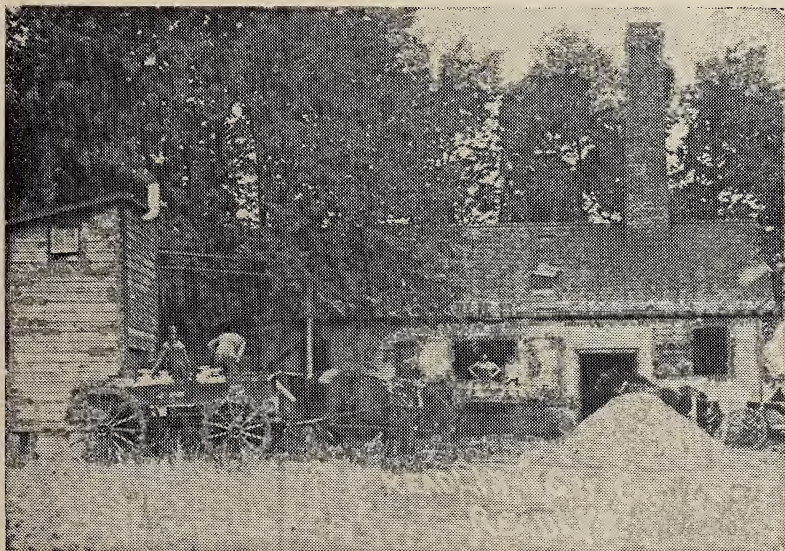
One of the original 33 patrons is still selling cream to the local creamery.

Various changes have taken place during its history. For a number of years milk and cream were delivered to the creamery but since June 1, 1941, only sweet cream is taken in and the unnecessary machinery disposed of. New equipment was purchased and installed as needed.

In the fall of 1950 the wooden exterior walls were torn down and replaced by hollow tile walls with glass block windows. At present time The Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company is buying the bulk butter and pound prints are sold to local patrons and stores.

Three buttermakers have served the Readlyn Creamery thus far, the first buttermaker, Fred Mills, from May, 1905 to Oct. 1905; Henry A. Griesse, Oct., 1905 to Jan., 1942, and the present buttermaker, Arnold C. Poock, since that time.

The present board of directors are: Werner Kuhlmann, president; Herman F. Thies, secretary; Les Moeller, treasurer; W. C. Hagenow and Earl Tiedt.



Buttermaking activities began in the summer of 1905 with a patronage list of 33 members. In 1925 the creamery was re-organized as a cooperative and since that time has been known as the Readlyn Co-Op Creamery.

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CO-OP CREAMERY**

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BARN CLEANERS AND SILO UNLOADERS
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READLYN

Farmers' Equity

Several years before the Readlyn Farmers' Equity was organized, the Readlyn Shipping Association had been organized and was doing a large livestock shipping business. About 1916 a number of the members began to urge the organization of a Farmers' Co-operative. The board of the Shipping Association hesitated to encourage the organization of a Co-op company, but the idea persisted. At the annual meeting of the Shipping Association in 1919 a vote on the subject was taken. The vote carried in favor of the Farmers' Co-op. A committee was appointed to sell stock to raise money for this purpose. The amount to be raised was \$6,000.

In February, 1919, a meeting was called to organize. The following were elected directors: John Strotmann, Herman Hay, Herman Matthias, H. H. Meyer, J. H. Richmann, Louis Matthias and L. C. Warneke. A building was rented immediately and operations began.

An application was made to Chicago Great Western but it took a long time to get the site on the tracks where the company is now located.

In 1920 the warehouse and coal sheds were erected.

In those days farmers did not buy the amount of protein feeds they do now. A small number of farmers were feeding balanced rations, not so much grass seeds, tile and commercial fertilizer grass seed inoculation.

Today, with a larger share of the cropland having been tilled, use of commercial fertilizer, hybrid seed, bigger farm machinery, tractors, better breeding, and feeding the production of farm crops, livestock, eggs and dairy products, has been increased tremendously in the farming industry. There is a possibility that it will be increased more yet. This has made a difference for increased service that a Farmers' Co-op can give.

The following have been employed as managers in the past years: F. H. Hinrichs, W. H. Hesse, Herbert Poock, H. H. Thoms, Willard Saurbrei, Warren Sauerbrei, and at the present time Virgil Peters is the manager.

The present board members are Arlin Matthias, president; Ernest J. Spier, vice president; William Maurer, secretary; H. H. Thoms, Ed Rathe, Paul Strottmann, Paul G. Meyerhoff.

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1904 - 1954

OUR FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

Veterans Of Foreign Wars

Wayne Teisinger Post No. 5661

In December of 1945 a group of returning veterans of Readlyn and surrounding territory gathered at a meeting and decided to form a veterans service organization in Readlyn. After a lengthy discussion it was decided to organize the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Several more meetings were called and finally on June 22, 1946, the V.F.W. was duly organized. At the meeting the ritual team of Post 2478, Sumner, Iowa, came to Readlyn to give the obligation and present the Cross of Malta.

The following officers were elected: Stanley Gehrke, commander; John Maurer, senior vice-commander; Jim Klodt, junior vice-commander; Melvin Richmann, quartermaster; Earl Rommel, chaplain; Elmer Bruns, surgeon; Leroy Bauer, post advocate; Herman Oltrogge, 3-year trustee; Arnol Hesse, 2-year trustee; Eric Harms, 1-year trustee.

Installation followed the election of officers. There were also brief talks by Dept. Judge Advocate Wm. Silvers and Comrade Keegan.

At the meeting of Feb. 5, 1946, it was voted to call the post Wayne Teisinger Post No. 5661, Wayne having been a local boy who gave his life for his country, and the post was named in his honor.

First meetings were held in the hall above Vic's Grocery. After a few meetings it was decided to find a permanent home for our post.

O. R. Thran was contacted as to whether the upstairs of his business building could be made of use.

Steps were built to the upstairs and the upstairs was completely remodeled by the members of the V.F.W. Post.

After many nights of hard work the room was made into a very nice home for the V.F.W. of which the members are very proud.

The past years the post has been very active in community activities.

Each year Memorial Day services are held in the local park. Attendance at the service has increased from year to year.

The post has taken part in several military funerals for departed comrades who have passed on since the post was organized.

Each year the post gives a Citizenship award to a local high school graduate who is picked for his or her personality, school work and participation in school functions. Judges are the school faculty, two members of the Ladies Auxiliary and a member of the post.

From time to time the post has also helped needy families in the community. The large and active membership of the post attests to the fact that it has become a vital and effective force in the growth of our town.

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WATERLOO, IOWA**

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AND

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WATERLOO, IOWA

V. F. W. Auxiliary

After urging by the Wayne Teisinger Post 5661 of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and after several visits by officers of the Third District Auxiliary, a group of women decided to start a V.F.W. Auxiliary in Readlyn.

On Jan. 13, 1949, the Wayne Teisinger Auxiliary to Post 5661 was instituted by Gretchen Nicholas of Ottumwa, department president. She was assisted by Pearl Person, third district president, who organized the auxiliary. The Waverly auxiliary sisters put on the floor work.

Those members taking the obligation that first night were: Maxine Miller, Mabel Lockard, Helen Muhlenhaupt, Florence Stahlhut, Arlyce Harms, Ethyl Rommel, Mabel Grinnell, Lucille Grinnell, Loureen Thran, Berdina Klodt, Evelyn Meyerhoff, Helen Gehrke, Amy Miller, Lydia Stahlhut, Heraldine Kuhlman, Grace Albrecht, Mary Lockard, Adella Oltrogge, Doris Hahn and Alma Scott.

Officers installed were: Mabel Grinnell, president; Helen Gehrke, senior vice-president; Lucille Grinnell, junior vice-president; Maxine Miller, treasurer; Helen Muhlenhaupt, secretary.

During the years we have been in existence, we have done much hospital work for our veterans including such things as sewing carpet rags, slippers, gifts and many other things to help in the care and entertainment of our veterans in hospitals. Also many cash gifts have been contributed to the various veterans hospitals for the purchase of equipment.

We also have assisted the Readlyn community in many drives such as polio, cancer and Red Cross. Also we have sold poppies every year for our veterans.

We have raised the money for our work by sponsoring many bake sales, card parties, white elephant parties and by giving a 3-act play in which all characters were members of the auxiliary.

We have assisted the post in the observance of Memorial Day in Readlyn.

We also remembered our local men in service by sending Christmas boxes to them several years.

In the five years we have been in existence we feel we have kept alive the two main purposes of our organization. That is to assist the post in every way possible and to care for our veterans in the hospitals to the extent of our ability.

At the present time we have 30 members and our present officers are: Ethyl Rommel, president; Norma Schrader, senior vice-president; Lucille Grinnell, junior vice-president; Leila Samuelson, treasurer; Hulda Meier, secretary.

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and Water Systems**

PHONE 67

READLYN

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WATERLOO, IOWA**

Boy Scouts

Troop 101, Boy Scouts of America, was first organized in Readlyn in September, 1951, through the sponsorship of the Readlyn area churches. The charter membership consisted of 21 boys and by summer of 1952 the troop had grown to a membership of about 32 boys, including about 11 Explorer Scouts within the troop.

At this time these boys, 14 years of age and over, felt that they wished to branch out into an Explorer Post, independent of the troop. Therefore a post was organized and received their charter in September, 1952.

At this same time a Cub Scout pack was organized in Readlyn, embracing boys between the ages of 8 and 11 years, receiving their original charter at that time.

Activities of the troop and post during the past three years have included hiking trips, overnight camps at their campsite on the Wapsie river east of Readlyn and a week's camping each summer at Camp Ingawanis near Waverly.

Advancements during this time have included three boys receiving the rank of Eagle Scout, the highest awarded in Scouting.

The entire organization here has been very active in working for advancement and the first year after chartering the troop earned permanent possession of the traveling trophy for advancements.

Outdoor activities of the Cub pack were highlighted by a Dad-and-Lad attendance at a "Lion Hunt" at Camp Ingawanis last summer.

The organization has been well supported and approved by the people of Readlyn and vicinity during its life to date.



Readlyn Band



Members of the Readlyn Band of 1916 posed for this picture following one of their concerts.

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Sylvania T. V.

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READLYN



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